

# News Release



USDA Forest Service  
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests  
*Gunnison Ranger District, 216 North Colorado, Gunnison CO 81230*

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Date:** April 28, 2009

**Contact(s):** Bill Jackson, Recreation Manager, 970.642.4439

## FOREST SERVICE PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT

The Forest Service, Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, Gunnison Ranger District, is preparing an Environmental Assessment for the proposed action of guided snowcat skiing and summer hiking, backpacking and peak climbing in the former Irwin Lodge permit area approximately 12 miles northwest of Crested Butte. The permit area would encompass 2003 acres from Robinson Basin to Independence Basin up to the top of Scarp Ridge and down to Lake Irwin. Avalanche mitigation would be necessary. This outfitter/guide service would be authorized by special use permit to Irwin Backcountry Guides, LLC. The number of service days being considered includes 2,300 days for snowcat skiing and 350 days for summer activities. Summer activities would be located on trails in the Crested Butte area. Additional authorization is being sought for locating a small weather station near the top of Scarp Ridge.

The base of operations would occur above Lake Irwin on private lands owned by Scarp Ridge, LLC. Access to the private property would originate from Crested Butte and the Kebler Pass Trailhead and would follow Kebler Pass Road (Gunnison County Road 12), Lake Irwin Campground Road (Forest Service Road (FSR) 826), Green Lake Road (FSR 826.1D) and Irwin Lodge Road (FSR 826.1C).

The proposal for snowcat skiing would provide diverse winter recreational opportunities for the public on National Forest System (NFS) lands near Crested Butte. This activity was previously

permitted over a 15-year period (1986-2002) and was considered an appropriate use of NFS lands. If approved, snowcat ski operations would commence in the 2009-2010 winter season.

The proposed action description and other information are available from the Gunnison District Office and the following project website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/#recreation>  
Additional information regarding this project can be obtained from Bill Jackson, Recreation Manager, 216 N. Colorado St., Gunnison, CO 81230, 970-642-4439, [wfjackson@fs.fed.us](mailto:wfjackson@fs.fed.us) .

The comment period for this proposal will end 30-days following the publication of the Legal Notice in the Gunnison Country Times. Comments may be submitted in writing by mail, email, fax, or by hand delivery to: Irwin Backcountry Guides Proposal, c/o Bill Jackson, 216 N. Colorado St., Gunnison, CO 81230; 970-642-4425 (FAX); or email to [wfjackson@fs.fed.us](mailto:wfjackson@fs.fed.us).

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